

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KUWAIT 01099 231136Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----128920 231137Z /17

O R 231016Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0302
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T KUWAIT 1099

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
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TAGS: PDEV, PORG, UNSC, ET, SO
SUBJ: SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION ON HORN OF AFRICA

REF: (A) KUWAIT 1039, (B) STATE 45038

1. POL OFF CALLED ON MFA AMERICAN/EUROPEAN DESK OFFICER
AL-SHAREKH FEB. 23 TO INQUIRE ABOUT CURRENT KUWAITI THINK-

ING ON FEASIBILITY OF UNSC ACTION REGARDING THE HORN OF AFRICA. AL-SHAREKH REFERRED TO FOUR PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS ON SUBJECT WHICH MFA OFFICIALS HAD HAD WITH US AND UK AMBASSADORS AND SAID THAT THE KUWAITI POSITION WAS AS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN TO THE RESPECTIVE AMBASSADORS. KUWAIT DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE "REMEDIES HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED" IN TERMS OF A LOCAL SOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT AND TAKES THE POSITION, ALONG WITH MOST AFRICAN STATES, THAT UNSC ACTION WOULD BE PREMATURE NOW, BEFORE THE OAU COMMISSION HAD A "REASONABLE CHANCE" TO SEE WHAT RESULTS IT COULD ACHIEVE. AL-SHAREKH ALSO ALLUDED TO A VERY RECENT "UN-CONFIRMED BUT CREDIBLE REPORT" TO THE EFFECT THAT SUDANESE PRES. NUMEIRI INTENDS TO UNDERTAKE A MEDATORY ROLE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA, WHICH AL-SHAREKH SAW AS AN ADDITIONAL REASON TO DELAY UNSC ACTION. AL-SHAREKH ADDED THAT THE MFA HAD COMMUNICATED THE ABOVE VIEWS TO THE KUWAITI UNSC DELEGATION.

2. IN RESPONSE TO POL OFF'S QUERY ABOUT PRESS REPORTS DESCRIBING LETTERS SENT OUT BY SAUDI KING KHALID TO ARAB GOVERNMENTS, EXHORTING THEM TO SUPPORT SOMALIA, AL-SHAREKH SAID THAT THE GOK HAD RECEIVED SUCH A LETTER. WHILE HE HAD NOT SEEN IT, AL-SHAREKH'S UNDERSTANDING WAS THAT PRESS REPORTS ON THE CONTENTS OF THESE LETTERS WERE ACCURATE, NAMELY, THAT ARAB NATIONS SHOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT SOMALIA'S MILITARY EFFORT.

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3. BRITISH AMBASSADOR INFORMED AMBASSADOR FEB. 23 THAT MFA UNDERSEC AL-RASHID HAD STATED TO HIM THE GOK POSITION ALONG SAME LINES AS PARA 1 ABOVE. AL-RASHID REPORTEDLY ADDED THAT THE NIGERIANS HAD INFORMED KUWAIT UN DEL THEY WANTED MORE TIME TO PURSUE THEIR MEDIATION EFFORT.

4. REGARDING USG DECISION TO PERMIT SHIPMENT OF MILITARY ITEMS TO ETHIOPIA, DESCRIBED REF B, AL-SHAREKH EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE TIMING OF THE DECISION WAS HARD TO UNDERSTAND, GIVEN PREVIOUSLY FIRM US POLICY AGAINST SUPPLYING EITHER SOMALIA OR ETHIOPIA. POL OFF SAID THAT SHIPMENT OF VEHICLES REPRESENTS NO CHANGE IN US POLICY AND THAT THE USG HAD HELD UP LETHAL ITEMS. EVEN SO, SAID AL-SHAREKH, THE TIMING AND SYMBOLISM OF A USG SHIPMENT OF MILITARY VEHICLES TO ETHIOPIA WOULD NOT BE VIEWED FAVORABLY BY SOMALIA'S SUPPORTERS, PARTICULARLY SAUDI ARABIA.

5. COMMENT: AL-SHAREKH WAS INCORRECT IN SAYING THAT BOTH US AND UK AMBASSADORS WERE INFORMED OF CURRENT GOK POSITION HE OUTLINED. UK AMBASSADOR HAD LEARNED OF IT FEB. 22 DURING LONG-DELAYED APPOINTMENT WITH MFA UNDERSECRETARY.

PURPOSE OF POL OFF'S CALL WAS TO OBTAIN THIS REACTION.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: WHILE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY USIS WIRELESS FILE CONCERNING AARON'S VISIT TO ADDIS ABABA WAS USEFUL, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE MORE AUTHORITATIVE INFORMATION CONCERNING ETHIOPIA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD PROPOSED UNSC ACTION WHICH COULD BE PASSED ON TO GOK. INFORMATION CONCERNING WESTERN FIVE DELIBERATIONS IN UN, SUCH AS IS BEING PROVIDED BRITISH AMBASSADOR BY FCO, WOULD ALSO BE WELCOME. FOR THE TIME BEING, HOWEVER, WE DO NOT PROPOSE TO MAKE FURTHER DEMARCHES TO GOK REGARDING UNSC ACTION UNLESS SO INSTRUCTED.
MAESTRONE

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